

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE **A5**

WASHINGTON POST  
30 April 1986

# Pentagon Aide Is Fired Over Leak of Rebel Aid

## *Policy Official Is Said to Fail Polygraph*

Associated Press

Michael E. Pillsbury has been fired from his high-level Defense Department post because he was suspected of leaking information to reporters about the shipment of Stinger antiaircraft missiles to rebels in Afghanistan and Angola, Pentagon sources said yesterday.

The sources, who agreed to discuss the matter only if not identified, said Pillsbury was informed Monday that he was being dismissed. Yesterday was his last day at work as assistant undersecretary of defense for policy planning.

There were reports in March that the Reagan administration had secretly begun to supply the sophisticated Stinger missiles to anticommunist rebels in Angola and Afghanistan. The Washington Post reported that the decision to supply the Stinger heat-seeking missiles to the two insurgencies was made in early March and kept secret among President Reagan's national security advisers.

In the past, the United States barred shipments of U.S.-made weapons to insurgent forces in the Third World, shipping instead Soviet- and Chinese-made weapons purchased on the international market.

Pentagon officials declined to confirm or deny the report at the time.

Maj. Fred Lash, a Pentagon spokesman, said yesterday that he had no comment on whether Pillsbury had been fired. "The reason

apparently involves a personnel matter," Lash said. He said he did not know how long Pillsbury had been an assistant undersecretary.

The Defense Department sources refused to say how suspicion about being the source of the leak fell on Pillsbury. But they said he had not passed a polygraph test during the course of a Defense Department investigation.

The sources also refused to say who had conducted the investigation for the Pentagon or how many other officials had come under scrutiny.

One source added that the dismissal of Pillsbury appeared certain to close the case because there was no indication of involvement by any other officials.

The source refused to provide details of the polygraph session that Pillsbury underwent. But the official noted that Pillsbury could have refused to take the lie-detector test.

"I don't know how suspicion came to focus on him, but it did, and then he flunked the lie detector," one source said.

"He has been fired," the source said yesterday. "He was gone today."

Another source said it was unclear whether Pillsbury might seek to challenge the dismissal. Since he is not a civil service employee, the only way he could challenge his firing would be by filing suit, the source said.

Efforts to reach Pillsbury for comment last night were unsuccessful.